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FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES IN TORONTO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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#172

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* In alphabetical order.

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INTRODUCTION

As the result of a presentation by Virginia Thompson, President of the Congress of Canadian Women, to the School Programs Committee of the Board of Education for the City of Toronto on February 28, 1983, in which she outlined concerns over school fund-raising activities. (see Appendix A), the Toronto Board requested the following:

> That the Director of Education be asked to report by the next School Programs Committee meeting on a consultation process for the development of policy guidelines concerning student fund-raising campaigns through such activities as selling chocolate bars and raffle tickets.
>
> That the Director of Education be asked to review the whole fund-raising issue and the kinds of specific fund-raising campaigns which are undertaken on behalf of agencies outside the school system.
>
> That the Director of Education also be asked to comment on the educational value of the student fund-raising campaigns.
>
> (Minutes of School Programs Committee, February 28, 1983.)

Toward the end of the 1982-83 school year, the Social Work Services and Research Departments of the Toronto Board cooperated in gathering data to realize the second part of the Board's request. This is a report of the findings.

Literature Review

There is virtually no research that has been carried out on the extent or nature of student fund-raising in Canada or the United States. The limited literature on the subject deals with school fund-raising experiences with the essential focus being on the provision of suggestions for improving school revenue raising techniques. The major theme of most writers is that fund-raising is an activity made necessary by educational funding cuts and budget squeezes, and the consequence of this reality is felt in the classroom in that "supplies are less abundant. Enrichment activities are curtailed. Reinforcement is slowed down." (Hack, 1979, p.84). The literature presents a theme that individual school fund-raising is necessary if the best interests of students are to be served. Further, it almost universally presents an argument that fund-raising can be fun, that it provides an opportunity for students to learn new skills, that it embraces classroom unity and improves communication between school and home.

Hack (1979) strongly supports the notion of student fund-raising and provides a list of fifteen methods that teachers and their students can use to raise funds for their school. Many of the suggestions relate to functions within the school and include such activities as selling cookies, popcorn and candy apples to students. Three of the suggestions include outside of school activity and require children to go door-to-door to recruit sponsors for a read-a-thon, a cross country marathon and

the selling of candies.

Raising funds as a curriculum component to teach job skills to students, provides the basis of a program developed by Veech-Townzen (1981). In her model, students design a company with an organization chart and compete for each position. The company makes products such as fountain pens and pencils and assigns students to task areas within the organization, such as: Personnel, Business Operations, Sales and Bookkeeping. Because there are actual products involved, Hack (1979, p.84) suggests that, "students view the unit seriously and hence true to life stress becomes an added component to the unit."

Babb and Marshall (1981) outline a similar program in which students' exposure to foreign language study combined with fund-raising is presented as a positive developmental experience. The authors describe a project which took place in North Dakota and outlined a procedure for planning an international dinner to raise funds and to publicize foreign language study. The process generated not only a financial return but provided a major learning experience to the participating students, as a result of the myriad organizational tasks that they were required to carry out.

Slusser (1983), writing on the role of the P.T.A. in fund-raising, is one of the few to consider the issue of the personal safety of children involved in raising funds for schools. She states emphatically that:

> ...the P.T.A. is expected to request children to avoid selling door-to-door. It is unsafe for children and an improper use of students. They may do so with their friends

> and relatives, and within other groups with which they are connected.
>
> (Slusser, 1983, p.24)

As a basic principle of school based fund-raising, Slusser makes the point that when the P.T.A. is involved in raising funds for schools, the process should reflect the commitment of improving the health, education, welfare and recreation for all children. If children are involved in fund-raising, then it must be good for the child.

The Task Force on Public Violence Agaist Women and Children (1983) indicated that it recognized the school as the nucleus of community activity but also as an extension of the home. It therefore emphasized the need for the school and community to cooperate in dealing with violence against women and children. The Task Force stated that boards of education should establish guidelines which would protect students while at the same time allowing them to mature.

Based on the assumption that a child who is alone is vulnerable, the Task Force indicated a need for school boards to develop protective policies, and made the following recommendations:

> That school boards review policies regarding student safety for all endorsed out-of-school activities including:
>
> a) Door-to-door fund-raising for school projects.
>
> b) Delivering school related information.
>
> c) Messenger-running services by students.
>
> d) Field trips.

PROCEDURES

Data Collection

The authors designed a survey questionnaire (included in Appendix B) to collect the information about school fund-raising activities and sent it to all Toronto secondary and elementary school principals through the Board mail on April 25, 1983. The principals were permitted to answer the questionnaires anonymously. Of the 158 questionnaires mailed, 138 (87%) were returned and analyzed. Three questionnaires arrived back after the data analysis was completed and were therefore not included.

The questionnaire was designed to provide as complete a picture of fund-raising activities in the Toronto school system as possible. Principals were asked to describe activities which involved collecting money for outside agencies as well as for school purposes and then to indicate whether the money was collected within and/or outside the school. In addition to giving the type of activities and the purpose of each, the principals were also asked to indicate the grade level(s) of the children involved and the frequency of each activity during the past academic year. The last page of the questionnaire listed four open-ended questions; the first about the role of parents in school fund-raising activities, the second about prizes, the third about cautions and the fourth about the educational value of such activities for the students.

Data Analysis

The open-ended questions were hand coded by a research technician after the investigators had designed a code book based on twenty randomly selected questionnaires. For many questions, the coder expanded the number of categories as necessitated by new response patterns encountered in later questionnaires.

Frequency counts, in most cases converted to percentages and presented in tables, have been used to present the results of the survey. For some questions, the number of categories used to code the responses have been collapsed, for the purposes of reporting, to only those responses that are most frequent or to categories which are broader than the original categories. In some instances, cross tabulations have been used to look at the data from two or more questions in more detail.

Most of the statistical analyses were done using Version H of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (1975.)

FINDINGS

The findings are based on data from 138 secondary and elementary schools; these schools represent 87% of the schools in the Board of Education for the City of Toronto. By type, the 138 schools grouped as follows:

TYPE OF SCHOOL	NUMBER
K-6	67
K-8	25
7-8	10
9-13	32
Other	1
No Information	3
	138

The Extent of Fund-Raising

The majority or all but 13% of the 138 schools reported fund-raising activities for the 1982-83 school year. By type of school, the extent of fund-raising was as follows:

TYPE OF SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE WITH FUND-RAISING
K-6	90%
K-8	88%
7-8	80%
9-13	84%

School fund-raising activities involve collecting money within and/or outside the school. Many of the schools (57%) reported collecting money both within and outside, while 15% collected money within only and 15% collected money outside only. The following are the percentages by type of school:

TYPE OF SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE WITHIN AND OUTSIDE
K-6	64%
K-8	76%
7-8	50%
9-13	34%

TYPE OF SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE WITHIN ONLY
K-6	6%
K-8	0%
7-8	0%
9-13	50%

TYPE OF SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE OUTSIDE ONLY
K-6	19%
K-8	12%
7-8	30%
9-13	0%

By organizing the data in a different way, it was possible to look at fund-raising activities by grade level. Table 1 gives the number of schools reporting activities within and/or outside at various grade levels.

These data indicate that fund-raising activities occur in all types of schools and at all grade levels in Toronto and that elementary schools are more likely than secondary schools to raise funds outside the school.

Type and Frequency of Fund-Raising Activities

Table 2 lists the types of school fund-raising activities, the frequency of occurrence in the school system and the percentage of 138 schools holding the activities during the past academic year. For example, 48% of the schools sold raffle tickets for a total of 66 sales and 20% of the schools held read-a-thons for a total of 28 read-a-thons.

The figures in the table show that bake sales and the sale of raffle tickets are the two most popular activities for raising school funds. Both these activities occur within and outside the schools, as do several other activities. Activities marked "*" occur within only, while activities marked "**" occur outside only.

Purposes of Fund-Raising Activities

The principals were asked to give the purpose of each school fund-raising activity. The results are provided in Table 3 in two groupings; the first group of purposes relates to school needs, while the second group relates mostly to other agencies. The figures indicate that more activities are organized to raise funds for field trips than any other purpose related to school needs and that those activities take place within and outside the schools. In the case of other agencies, schools are most likely to raise funds for the Inner City Angels, UNICEF, the M.S. Society and the United Way, with funds for the first three nearly always being raised outside the schools by elementary pupils while funds for the United Way are usually raised by secondary students within the schools.

The Roles of Parents

According to school principals, parents are much more likely to encourage, favor, support or even get involved in school fund-raising activities than they are to discourage or oppose them. Details about the roles of parents are given in Table 4.

Prizes

A total of 70 principals representing 51% of the 138 schools reported that students were offered prizes for the amount of

money they raised. The kinds of prizes offered are listed in Table 5 and are obviously quite varied and frequently quite valuable.

Cautions Given to Students

Principals were asked whether students are given cautions about raising funds outside the school and then asked to elaborate on their answers. A total of 89 principals representing 64% of 138 schools responded in the affirmative. Their elaborations are presented in Table 6. Some of the responses -- grouped in the second part of the table -- are not so much cautions as they are instructions about selling and dealing with people. The two cautions which are most commonly given are (1) sell to family and friends, and (2) sell at certain hours; however, these are not given to the majority of the students.

The Educational Value of Fund-Raising Activities

Over three-quarters of the principals (78% of 138) described an educational value of fund-raising activities and some wrote extensively on the topic. As Table 7 reveals, the ideas were numerous, positively disposed and varied. No one concept was given by a majority of the principals.

TABLE 1

FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade Level	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS RAISING FUNDS			
	Total	Within and Outside	Within Only	Outside Only
K-3	72	54	4	14
4-6	83	62	5	16
7-8	33	25	1	7
9-10	27	11	16	---
11-13	28	11	17	---

TABLE 2

TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

	Type	Frequency	Percentage of Schools Holding Activity *** (N = 138)
	Bake sale	87 lots (2) monthly (1)	63%
	Raffle tickets	66	48%
	Chocolate/Candy sale	38	28%
	Balloon race	37	27%
**	Halloween collection	29	21%
	Read-a-thon	28	20%
	Combined activities	23	17%
*	Lunch sale	17	12%
*	Dance	16	12%
*	Coffee Sale	15	11%
	Fun fair/Carnival/Valentine fair	14	10%
	Flea market/Rummage sale	13	9%
	Fruit sale	9	7%
	Spice sale	8	6%
	Bike-a-thon	7	5%
	Run-a-thon	7	5%
*	Valentine sale/Valentine tree	6	4%
	Ticket sale (not raffle tickets)	6	4%
*	School play	6	4%
	Toothbrush sale	5	4%
*	Flower sale	5	4%
	Donations	5	4%
	Christmas gift/basket/decorations	5	4%
	Swim-a-thon	5	4%
*	School concerts	5	4%
	Button sale	5 continuing (1)	4%
*	Auction/dream auction	5	4%
*	Multicultural night	3	2%
*	Book sale	3	2%
**	Bowl-a-thon	3	2%
*	Ball game	3	2%
*	Guessing game	3	2%
*	Photographs	3	2%
*	Fashion show	2	1%

(Continued)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

	Type	Frequency	Percentage of Schools Holding Activity *** (N = 138)
*	Sale of school clothing	2	1%
**	Sale of Regal products	2	1%
*	Sale of Campus/Health kits	2	1%
*	Prune and Roses Day	2	1%
**	Walk-a-thon	2	1%
**	Skate-a-thon	2	1%
*	Toy drive	2	1%
*	Films/movie night/video films	2	1%
*	Supper/Potluck	2	1%
*	Sale of old T-shirts	2	1%
*	Dime collection	2 weekly (1)	1%
*	Sale of pop	1 lots (1)	1%
*	Hot dog sale	1	1%
*	Selling refreshment at night school	lots (1)	
*	Sandwich counter	lots (1)	
*	Sale of popcorn	continuing (1)	
*	Juice machine in cafeteria	daily (1)	
	Other activities that were noted once	21	15%
	Combined activities	28	20%

* Activity held within school only.

** Activity held outside school only.

*** These percentages do not add up to 100% because many principals gave more than one response.

TABLE 3

PURPOSES OF FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

Purpose	Number of Fund-Raising Activities *			
	Within School	Outside School	Within and Outside	Total
Field trips	38	26	1	65
Home & School Association	8	10	3	21
Music program/School band	14	2	2	18
Athletic Association/award/equipment	16	1	---	17
Classroom/Student activities fund	13	---	---	13
School equipment/Curriculum materials	4	9	---	13
Student council	11	1	---	12
Playground	4	6	---	10
Computers	3	4	---	7
Scholarships/Awards	2	4	---	6
Year book	5	1	---	6
School club	4	---	---	4
Extra enrichment activities	2	2	---	4
Uniforms/team sweaters	1	2	---	3
School prom/dance	2	---	---	1
Swim program	1	1	---	1
Bowling	2	---	---	2
Inner City Angels	2	32	2	36
UNICEF	1	28	---	29
M.S. Society	2	24	---	26
United Way	21	2	1	24
Foster family/child	9	---	---	9
Cancer Society	4	4	---	8
Hospital for Sick Children	4	---	---	4
Charitable organization	4	---	---	4
Big Brothers	---	4	---	4
Variety Village/club for handicapped	1	2	---	3
Heart Foundation	2	---	---	2
Crippled children	---	2	---	2
Leukemia Fund	2	---	---	2
Needy family	1	1	---	2
Purposes named once	12	5	---	17
Combined purposes	26	33	3	62
No specification	2	2	---	4

* These numbers represent the number of activities used to raise money for each purpose.

TABLE 4

THE ROLES OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

Role of Parents	Percentage of Principals Who Responded (N = 138) *
Organize/plan	30%
Encourage	29%
Participate/play active role	23%
Support	22%
Approve	9%
Give suggestions	4%
Enthusiasm/enjoyment	2%
Positive feedback	1%
Activity requested by parents	1%
Sponsor activity	1%
Cooperate	1%
Discourage/disapprove	2%
Disapproved of door-to-door activity	2%
No involvement	8%
No objection	8%
Consulted/informed	7%
Neutral attitude	2%
Not consulted	1%
No response	2%

* Some principals gave more than one answer, therefore the percentages do not add up to 100%.

TABLE 5

STUDENT PRIZES FOR FUND-RAISING

Student Prize	Percentage of Schools Offering Prize (N = 138) *
Small cash prizes	11%
Small prizes (value under $25)	9%
Radio	7%
T-shirts	5%
Baseball/basket ball/football/hockey sticks	5%
Percent of profit from sales	4%
Bike	4%
Theatre tickets	2%
Games/video games/electronic games	2%
Jewelry/school pin/14K earring	2%
Books	2%
Toys	2%
Pass to McDonald's	2%
Records	1%
Passport to Wonderland	1%
Tape recorder	1%
Calculators	1%
Watches	1%
Certificate of merit/buttons/ribbons	1%
School supplies	1%
Camera	1%
Fair tickets	1%
Prizes mentioned once	9%
No specification	11%

* This column does not add up to 100% because some respondents gave more than one answer.

TABLE 6

CAUTIONS GIVEN TO STUDENTS

Caution	Percentage of Schools Giving Caution (N = 138) *
Sell only to family and friends	25%
Go certain time/daylight hours	11%
No door-to-door	9%
Go in 2's and 3's	8%
Parents/staff members to supervise/accompany student	7%
Parental permission	7%
Stay outside houses/apartments	5%
Stress on safety	4%
Warn about strange people/situation	3%
Sell only in neighborhood/appointed area	3%
Carry identification	2%
Lesson in politeness	8%
Talk about salesmanship	5%
Pre-sale meeting	4%
Talk about handling money	3%
Brochure given/directions sent home	3%
Talk about school reputation	2%
Responses that were mentioned once	13%
No specification	7%

* This column does not add up to 100% because some respondents gave more than one response.

TABLE 7

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

Educational Value	Percentage of Principals Who Gave Value (N = 138) *
School spirit/pride/togetherness	14%
Responsibility	14%
Organizational skills	12%
Accounting/arithmetic	10%
Awareness of the less fortunate	9%
Help self and others	9%
Money management	9%
Help worthwhile cause	9%
Teamwork	8%
Reading	7%
School community cooperation	7%
Social consciousness	7%
Continuation of school program	6%
Set/work for common goal	6%
Build self image	5%
Cultural exposure	4%
Polite salesmanship	4%
Develop talents	4%
Language development	4%
Learn to greet/meet people	4%
Student effort/active role	4%
Educational value is very important	3%
How to handle different types of people	3%
Enthusiasm reflected in regular school work	2%
Students feel they have made contributions	2%
Appreciation of success	1%
Involvement in community activities	1%
Awareness of the cost of special school program	1%
Create variety of learning opportunities	1%
Practical economics	1%
Initiative	1%
Sharing	1%
Involvement in discussion	1%
Learn to handle refusal	1%
Learn difficulties of selling	1%
Advertising	1%
No educational value	3%
Minimal educational value	1%
No response	22%

* This column does not add up to 100% because some respondents gave more than one response.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Fund-raising by school pupils has been a long tradition in North America. Most adults can recall their own experiences during elementary and secondary school years, selling raffle tickets to raise money for school projects. School fund-raising has as its rationale the enhancement of instruction through the provision of goods and services which are beyond the normal fiscal allocation of school boards. Aside from fund raising for school purposes, there are a number of community charitable organizations which use schools and students for raising funds for their particular client groups.

The practice of fund-raising in schools exists in both elementary and secondary panels; however, the issue becomes most sensitive at the elementary level because of the age of the children. Young children who are alone or in small groups are considered to be highly vulnerable to abuse.

Fund-raising in the Toronto school system is extensive with students at all grade levels and in all types of schools involved. Money is collected through activities which take place both within and outside the schools. Not only is there a broad range of activities used to collect funds but the money is used for a wide variety of purposes. The two most popular activities, both of which take place within and outside the schools, are bake sales and sales of raffle tickets. Other activities include such things as read-a-thons, flea markets, balloon races and dances. Money is most frequently collected for school trips but is also collected for many other school needs such as school bands,

sports equipment and computers. Several outside charitable organizations, particularly Inner City Angels, UNICEF, the M.S. Society and the United Way, also collect funds through the schools and their pupils in Toronto.

The fund-raising activities are considered by most principals to have educational value and are more likely to be encouraged than discouraged by parents. At least half of the schools offer students prizes for the amount of money they are able to raise.

When funds are raised outside the schools, students are frequently cautioned about approaching strangers, collecting money alone, and collecting after dark. Sometimes students are also instructed on how to sell and deal with people.

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APPENDIX A

VIRGINIA THOMPSON'S PRESENTATION

TO THE TORONTO BOARD

PRESENTATION MADE TO THE BOARD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1983

By: Virginia Thompson,
President,
Congress of Canadian Women,
924 King Street West,
Toronto,Ontario Telephone: 924-2872 - Office
531-6614 - Home

Purpose of Address: To express thoughts on children selling raffle tickets, chocolate bars, etc., after school.

On behalf of the Toronto Congress of Canadian Women, I would like to give credit to the Toronto Board of Education in its attempts to get more money from the province of Ontario to provide better programs for our school children. However, there are several factors that must be considered:

- Local property taxes will be increased to provide better programs for children.
- Cutbacks on the provincial level have left us short of funds to provide quality education for our children.
- With Bill 127, lack of funds will be even more critical.
- These cut backs have put our schools in a very serious predicament.
- In order to raise the thousands of dollars that each school requires for special trips, after four programs, special activities, etc., our children are being used as door-to-door salespersons. I am sure that all of us have had some child knock on our door on different occasions in an effort to sell tickets, chocolate bars, raise funds for school activities, etc., while others solicit on the street.
- My reasons for objecting are that the taxpayers are already carrying the heavy burden of paying for education - a burden which should be carried by the provincial and federal government who could tax companies to pay a larger share of education costs.
- Responses from children when asked about selling tickets were: "I went door-to-door - alone."
- Last week my son came home with his first book of tickets (6-year old). He was given a message from the school cautioning children not to go door-to-door. Many tickets are given out with no caution.
- But this is not good enough - a prize is usually offered for the top ticket seller - what student can resist the chance to win a ten-speed bicycle if that person is the top ticket seller.
- Our schools are giving children a double message - they, as well as the parents, are telling children not to go with strangers - but how else can you be a top ticket seller?

/2

- Some people say that the onus is on the parents - they should accompany their children or caution them against approaching strangers; but friends tell me that their children have received tickets from school and sold them before the mother even got home from work. One person told me that her son got the principal's name on a sponsor sheet on a deal that the boy go door-to-door first.
- This is too large a city for us to know all the people in the neighbourhood. With high unemployment, the number of transients increase, making the city a very dangerous place - our children should be made aware of this.
- Ticket selling places a great deal of pressure on the family. Many families have one or both members unemployed and can not afford to pay $10.00 for a book of tickets.
- There is competition in the classrooms as to how many books of tickets a child has sold. We do not need to place our children in these situations.
- The Congress of Canadian Women would like to help work out alternatives. As short-term, we feel that the use of children as solicitors for school funds must stop. It is a dangerous practice. Any fund-raising activity by individual schools should be the responsibility of parents and teachers - not children
- The other alternative is to keep the unity built between parent and teacher, around Bill 127. This is the first time Metro-wide parent groups have been established. We would like to see it pursuing this issue as another result of cutbacks in education, and going after the province for increased grants to education.
- Higher levels of government should take on their responsibility to meet the needs of our young children.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

April 25, 1983

QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

CONCERNING

FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

1. During the past academic year, have the students in your school participated in fund-raising activities which involved collecting money WITHIN and/or OUTSIDE the school which the school sponsored or which it authorized for another agency (including parent organizations)?

WITHIN	YES ☐	NO ☐
OUTSIDE (door-to-door, street, etc.)	YES ☐	NO ☐

If YES to either, please complete the remainder of the questionnaire.
If NO to both, return questionnaire to Greg McClare, Student Services Dept.

2. Describe each type of activity (e.g., selling chocolate bars, bake sale, raffle tickets); indicate the frequency of each during the past academic year; give the purpose of each (e.g., fund school trips, buy school equipment, UNITED APPEAL, RED CROSS, UNICEF).

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY DURING 1982-3 SCHOOL YEAR	PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY OR SPONSOR	CIRCLE GRADE LEVEL
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-2, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13
			K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-13

NOTE: Put a "*" beside each activity which was OUTSIDE the school.

3. What role do parents play with respect to such activities? That is, do they encourage, disapprove, organize, etc.?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Have students been offered prizes (e.g. bicycles) for the amount of money they raise? Elaborate.

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Are students given any cautions about raising funds <u>OUTSIDE</u> the school environment? Elaborate.

_____

_____

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6. Comment on the educational value of these activities for the students.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

<u>PLEASE RETURN QUESTIONNAIRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO GREG McCLARE, STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT</u>

POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL